

Minutes 2016.02.24

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Commissioners Present: Marshall L. Harris Vice Chairman, Joseph M. Prior Clerk

Employees Present: Superintendent: Craig W. Jalbert; Secretary: Dale Barnes-Johnson

Open the Meeting: The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

Accept the Meeting Minutes: Marty made a motion to accept the meeting minutes of January 6 and January 28, 2016. Joe seconded and it was unanimously voted.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS:

Hospital Road Pump Rehab Project ~ the contractor continues to deliver materials to the site for the project. Review of the motor control center spec is complete, and the submittal has been accepted. The initial 12-13 week lead-time quoted by the supplier has now changed to 20 weeks. USDA is forgiving with the schedule however Craig would like to see the project completed before September. Craig is pointing out potential items of concern with the bypass plan to T&H and the contractor. Craig reminded both in an email of the flowmeter and sampling requirement during bypass operations and forwarded rental information. Craig has also cautioned contractor about the effects of having no sewage grinder inline before the bypass pumps.

Craig and Dale have been working with Cristina Pedro, Town Treasurer to finalize the finance loan plan; the \$600,000 loan portion must be spent before we access \$200,000 in grant funds. After the loan portion is spent, USDA will pay off our interim financing and we will close on the loan; FY2017 budget will include an article to transfer funds from Sewer Enterprise Free Cash to cover the interim financing interest. The first USDA loan payment will be due FY2018 one year after closing. One of the terms in the letter of conditions requires an annual deposit of \$20,000 in a reserve account for five years, amounting to \$100,000 at the end of the five years; further clarification is needed as to whether funds must remain encumbered for the life of the loan or not.

FY2017 Budget ~ Craig will be meeting with FINCOM Monday, February 29th to go over the budgets submitted. The Sewer Budget proposal includes an increase to the Maintenance of Joint Treatment line item by \$5,000 based on bills and projections, increasing the quarterly flat rate by \$1.00, from \$86.50 to \$87.50 per quarter.

Significant changes to the water budget include a \$3,000 increase to the Contractors, Systems line item to make funds available to hire outside certified contract operators to provide fill in services to the department. The Water & Sewer Department is presently out of compliance with MassDEP staffing requirements, a total of 4 certified operators are required for Monson, and right now we only have two, Tom Murphy and Craig. Mass 310 CMR 22.11B states that a public water system shall be operated at all times by a primary and secondary distribution operator and a primary and secondary treatment operator. Our two new employees are still in the training process and must pass the D2 and T1 tests before they can apply for both the certifications Monson requires. Once certified they will receive operator in training distribution/treatment licenses. However, they will still function under the supervision of the primary operators. The OIT process usually lasts about two years and then Full Operator status is granted by the State Board of Licensure. Unfortunately until that time we run into trouble when both Tom and Craig are out of town or ill and unavailable, we no longer have any backup certified operators employed by the Town to fill the void. The increase in the line item will provide funds to hire outside certified contract operators who can fill in and keep us in compliance in the event we are caught short again, or weekend standby when everyone is out of town. For the long term, this line item will be evaluated on a yearly basis to ensure there is sufficient amount budgeted to accommodate the projected need. Due to the abnormal turnover the department has experienced over the last 14 years we predict the department will be repeating this same hiring/training process again within two to three years. The Commission and Craig are responsible for keeping the department in compliance with the laws and regulations that govern public water systems and protecting the department and the Town from any potential liabilities. The Commission is concerned \$3,000 is not enough to cover active response or standby pricing.

Department Activity

Town Report ~ 2015 Town Report has been completed

2015 Annual Statistical Report ~ the eASR has been completed and submitted.

Station Maintenance ~ brush is being cleared at the Hospital Road Pump Station.

Easement Clearing ~ Lamcotec will be removing the jersey barriers and remove the guardrails to allow clearing of water easement in anticipation of having the easement mowed this summer.

Internet Connection ~ CMD will be coming in to complete the switchover from DSL to Comcast.

Lead & Copper ~ newspaper headlines have heightened concerns regarding lead and copper in drinking water, Craig remarked how Monson is very fortunate to have chosen Sodium Carbonate (Soda Ash) to adjust the water to a non-corrosive pH. It is safe and testing throughout the system has shown this treatment to be very effective at reducing the amount of lead and copper found in the drinking water of Monson homes.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting has been set for Wednesday March 9, 2016, at 3:30 p.m.

ADJOURN: A motion was made by Joe and seconded by Marty to adjourn at 4:30 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Joseph M. Prior, Clerk

cc: Selectmen